crease public investment in agriculture so as to achieve the targeted growth rate in agriculture. These two schemes are expected to go a long way in operationalising many of the provisions of the National Policy for Farmers, 2007 through state specific de-centralized strategy taking into account the agro-climatic and other local conditions for development of agriculture and allied sectors.

Implementation of Crop Insurance Scheme

†1556. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering on simplification and effective implementation of the Crop Insurance Scheme; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In pursuant to the Union Budget Announcement for 2007-08 a pilot Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme (WBCIS) has already been implemented during Kharif, 2007.Rabi 2007-08 in selected areas/crops in the States of Karnataka, Rajasthan, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra. The scheme insures farmers against the likelihood of financial loss on account of anticipated loss in crop yield resulting from adverse incidence of weather conditions. The scheme is simple and provides quick compensation to farmers, as it is based on weather indices. The scheme will be continued during Kharif, 2008.

Food Processing Units in Orissa

1557. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether, on account of lack of food-processing units in certain districts of Orissa, the farmers have been forced to sell their maize produce at throw-away prices and rains have further played spoilsport for corn farmers of KBK region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action plan of the Centre to help the backward Orissa State both physically and financially to address the above long-standing grievance of the beleaguered farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) No information on the farmers of certain districts of Orissa having been forced to sell their maize produce at throw-away prices due to lack of processing units has been received. However, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED) has procured 2400 Metric Tonnes of maize in the scheduled districts of Orissa in the State Government account at Minimum Support Price (MSP) of 620/- per quintal during Kharif-2007-08 season.

Further, in order to promote food processing industries in the country, Government of India is providing financial assistance in the form of grant-in-aid for setting up of food

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

processing industries, technology upgradation and modernization of food processing units in the states including the state of Orissa through entrepreneurs.

Subsidy to MSCCGMF Ltd.

1558. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of Maharashtra has applied to the Central Government for subsidy to the Maharashtra State Cooperative Cotton Growers Marketing Federation Ltd. for maintaining MSP of cotton during the 2004-05 and 2006-07 seasons;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the present status of the proposal and the steps taken to expedite a decision on the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government of Maharashtra requested the Ministry of Agriculture to appoint the Maharashtra State Cooperative Cotton Growers Marketing Federation Ltd. (MSCCGMFL) as a Central Agency or an agent of National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) or Cotton Corporation of India for Procurement of Cotton in the State and provide subsidy to it.

(c) This Ministry reviewed the request of the State Government and could not accede to it.

Orissa Governments's demand to increase MSP for paddy

1559. MR. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Chief Minister of Orissa has written a letter to the centre for enhancement of MSP for paddy at par with wheat, since the input cost of paddy is higher while returns are marginal for farmers; and

(b) if so, the status of the proposal, *inter-alia* indicating the time-frame within which the above demand of the Orissa government would be met?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Chief Minister of Orissa had addressed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister seeking enhancement of the MSP of paddy for 2007-08 at par with the MSP of Wheat to Rs. 1000 per quintal. This has already been replied to by the Hon'ble Agriculture Minister. The MSP of paddy for the 2007-08 crop season has been fixed at Rs.645 per quintal for paddy (Common) and at Rs. 675 per quintal for paddy (Grade A). Further, an additional incentive bonus of Rs. 100 per quintal has also been given.

Payment of insurance claims of farmers

†1560. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI:
DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether more crops and areas have been brought under the cover of the National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (NAIS);

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.